

October 23, 2017

**Subject:** Climate Change Research Program

**Reporting Period:** August – October 2017

**Staff Lead:** Louise Bedsworth, Office of Planning and Research

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## **Recommended Action:**

For information and discussion only – no action required.

## **Summary:**

This report outlines a proposed approach for the development of a new research program at the Strategic Growth Council, funded by the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. It includes a high-level overview of existing State research programs, a proposed approach for the development of the program, and a tentative timeline showing key program milestones.

## **Background:**

AB 109 (Budget Act of 2017) appropriates \$11 million from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) to the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) for the Strategic Growth Council (SGC) to “fund research on reducing carbon emissions, including clean energy, adaptation, and resiliency, with an emphasis on California.”

Research grants under this program will be awarded on a competitive basis. Eligible recipients include the University of California, the California State University, federal research laboratories, and private non-profit colleges and universities located within California. Prior to awarding grants, the Strategic Growth Council must develop a plan that establishes research needs as described by the legislation.

## **Proposed Approach:**

SGC and OPR staff are working to develop the research plan and program guidelines to ensure rapid disbursement of the available funds, but also to ensure that the program augments existing research State-funded research programs and avoids redundancies. To this end, staff is undertaking the following actions.

### **1. Research Investment Plan Development**

Staff will first develop a Draft Climate Research Investment Plan, which according to the enabling legislation must establish carbon emission reductions research needs, including in the areas of clean energy, adaptation, and resiliency.

The 2015 Climate Change Research Plan for California (2015 Research Plan) is a helpful starting point for SGC’s Research Investment Plan. The Climate Action Team Research



Working Group developed the 2015 Research Plan through agency consultation and a series of public workshops. The 2015 Research Plan outlines research needs in three areas: monitoring and modeling of climate change impacts, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and safeguarding California in the face of a changing climate. In addition, the 2015 Research Plan highlights cross-cutting research needs, including environmental justice and equity, economics of climate change, and other topics that span sectors and issues of mitigation and adaptation.

Building from the 2015 Research Plan, staff will further develop a Draft Climate Research Investment Plan through an interagency, public process that will include the following:

- **State Agency Consultation**

SGC and OPR staff will collaborate with managers and staff of other State-funded research programs, including those managed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB), California Energy Commission (CEC), California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), California Environmental Protection Agency, and California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). This interagency collaboration will help to identify research gaps. In addition to agency consultation, the SGC Draft Climate Research Investment Plan will be presented and discussed in the Climate Action Team Research Working Group and the Energy Climate Adaptation Working Group. The Energy Sector Climate Adaptation Working Group meets quarterly and includes OPR, California Energy Commission, California Public Utilities Commission, and the Office of Emergency Services.

- **Public Workshops**

Staff will hold three public workshops to receive input on the Draft Climate Research Investment Plan. Workshops will be held in three locations: Southern California, the Central Valley and Northern California. Workshops will be held in partnership with local academic institutions to ensure engagement of the research community.

The Plan will also be presented and discussed at the December 8 meeting of the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program's (ICARP) Technical Advisory Council. The meeting is open to the public and the Technical Advisory Council membership includes state agencies, local and regional government, utilities, and community-based and non-governmental organizations.

The final Climate Research Investment Plan will outline research needs and research areas to be included in a funding solicitation. The Plan will be presented for Council adoption at the January 2018 Council meeting.

## **2. Program Guideline Development**

The Climate Research Investment Plan will also include funding guidelines for program applicants. The guidelines will be informed by input at the public workshops and will identify the research areas included in the solicitation, evaluation criteria, and peer review process.

## Tentative Program Timeline:

The following table outlines a tentative schedule for program implementation.

Date	Activities
October 9 – 31, 2017	Discussions with research programs being conducted through SGC member agencies (ARB, OEHHA, CEC, Caltrans, DWR etc.)
October 23, 2017	<b>SGC Council Meeting:</b> Staff presentation of tentative timeline and approach
November 10, 2017	Public release of initial Draft Climate Research Investment Plan
Weeks of November 10 and November 24	Three public workshops to inform plan development in Southern California, the Central Valley and Northern California
December 5, 2017	<b>SGC Council Meeting:</b> Presentation and discussion of Draft Climate Research Investment Plan
December 8, 2017	ICARP Technical Advisory Council Meeting: Presentation and discussion of draft Plan
January 2018	<b>SGC Council Meeting:</b> Recommend adoption of final Climate Research Investment Plan
January 2018	Release of competitive funding solicitation
February 2018	Technical Assistance Webinars/Workshops for applicants
March 2018	Review of research proposals by expert committee
March 2018	<b>SGC Council Meeting:</b> Recommend of research grant awards

